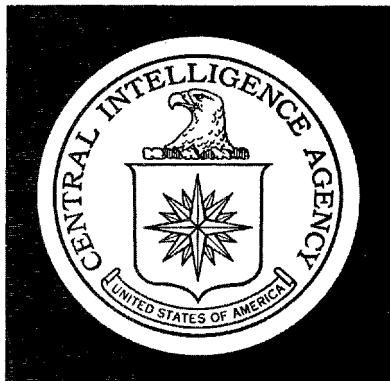


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Secret

50

15 December 1969

25X1

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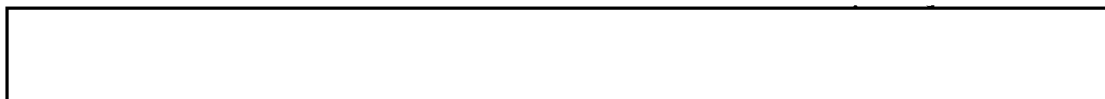
No. 0299/69
15 December 1969

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

USSR - Communist China: The USSR may have decided to downgrade its delegation to the talks in Peking. (Page 1)

South Vietnam: There are more reports of Communist plans for another flare-up of military activity before Christmas. (Page 2)



25X1

Mexico: Student activists are trying to revive an antigovernment campaign. (Page 4)

Dahomey: A military triumvirate has been established. (Page 5)



25X1

USSR-Egypt: Arms supply (Page 7)

25X1



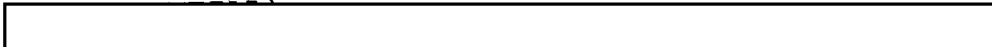
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USSR - Communist China: The Soviets may be signaling a decision to downgrade their delegation to the talks in Peking.

The announcement of the return to Moscow of First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and his deputy stated that the purpose was to participate in the coming session of the USSR Supreme Soviet. The Russians have been toying with the idea of downgrading the talks for some time, however. The other six members of the Soviet delegation are apparently remaining in Peking.

A New China News Agency statement on 13 December claimed that the Soviet negotiators would be gone for only one week and that the talks would be "temporarily recessed in their absence." This could be a thinly veiled threat that the talks might break down completely if the two Russians do not return to Peking. Nevertheless, neither side has much to gain in allowing the talks to end now, and some compromise on this issue may still be arranged.



25X1

15 Dec 69

Central Intelligence Bulletin

1

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South Vietnam: There were more reports over the weekend of Communist plans for another flare-up of military activity before Christmas.

25X1 [redacted] attacks
will begin in mid-December and will concentrate mainly on Tay Ninh Province and the upper Mekong Delta region.

25X1 [redacted]

The evidence indicates that the Communists will rely for the most part on shellings and on sapper and terrorist attacks. The larger enemy ground units along the borders and near in-country base areas still are largely out of action.

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15 Dec 69

Central Intelligence Bulletin

2

SECRET

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Mexico: Student activists are trying to revive an antigovernment campaign.

25X1 [redacted] university students representing various political groups, from moderate to extremist, have united in opposing the presidential candidacy of Luis Echeverria. Echeverria, whose nomination by the ruling party makes his electoral victory certain, was an author of the government repression of last year's massive student movement.

The new student coalition has issued large quantities of propaganda of professional quality and appears to be well financed. In contrast to earlier futile efforts to rekindle political fires at the university, several rallies during the past week have been well attended.

Activists have taken as their ostensible issue a demand for the release of political prisoners. Several dozen students arrested during last year's disturbances remain in jail, and a number of prominent leftist writers and leaders of fringe groups have also been detained over the past year.

A rally scheduled for today at the National University in Mexico City could be the occasion for violence if extremists try to provoke interference by security forces. [redacted]

25X1

15 Dec 69

Central Intelligence Bulletin

4

SECRET

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Dahomey: A military triumvirate has been created to govern until promised elections can be held.

The three-man directorate is headed by Lt. Col. De Souza, an ineffectual officer who was probably chosen because he is least offensive to various army factions. The other members are Lt. Col. Kouandete, who almost single-handedly pulled last week's coup, and Lt. Col. Sinzogan, the ambitious and devious gendarmerie commander. Kouandete suffered a setback when he was not named to head the junta, but he retains his key post as army chief of staff.

Some divisions in the military persist in the wake of the squabbling that followed the coup, and more changes may be in the offing. Kouandete, who has been deserted by former allies within the army, may find it particularly difficult to maintain his position. He is under pressure to release from jail a former president who is his arch enemy and predecessor as chief of staff.

Civilian ministers took advantage of the divisions in the military by refusing to cooperate unless deposed president Zinsou were released from jail. Zinsou was freed in Cotonou on 13 December. Two of Dahomey's three regional political leaders have returned from exile at the invitation of the military, and the third is expected momentarily. The return of these three, all former presidents, will lead to an intensification of civilian political maneuvering and probably a rekindling of regional and tribal rivalries.

25X1

15 Dec 69

Central Intelligence Bulletin

5

SECRET

NOTES

USSR-Egypt: The Soviets may have recently agreed to supply the UAR with some additional arms.

[redacted] Moscow promised the UAR "everything it asked for"--including arms--during the course of talks in Moscow last week, which were attended by Nasir's personal aide and the Egyptian war minister. The communiqué issued at the end of the visit did not provide a clear signal of such intentions. It did, however, refer to certain unspecified "practical steps" aimed at enhancing Soviet-Egyptian cooperation.

[redacted]

* * * *

[redacted]

15 Dec 69

Central Intelligence Bulletin

7

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